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ABSTRACT

Intended to provide basic information about the attitudes and behavior of the rural poor, this report summarized data gathered from 9 families living in Michigan's lower peninsula. Selected because their houses and surroundings indicated permanent occupancy by people who were poor, the families were interviewed by 2 college-age women. Responses to 93 questions were taped for later transcription and analysis. The questions provided insight into topics such as (1) why the families lived in the country rather than in the city, (2) how they felt about their socioeconomic situation and lack of mobility, (3) goals for their children and their own personal failures, and (4) their experiences with government and private agencies and private business. Results of the analysis indicated a need for research on (1) the mental health implications of rural poverty; (2) experimental programs to educate, motivate, and train; (3) community development; (4) agencies and agents; and (5) comparative studies. The interview guide for this survey of rural living and community needs is appended. (BD)

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RURAL MANPOWER CENTER

REPORT NO. 13 MARCH 1970

A SILENT MINORITY:

(A Research Feasibility Probe of Discontent Among the Rural Poor)

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FOREWORD

The relationship between rural manpower and rural poverty has led to the establishment of a rural manpower research task force focusing upon some of the problems of the rural poor in Michigan. Professor Denton Morrison of the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University is a member of this task force. Patricia Phillips was his Graduate Research Assistant.

The dimensions of rural poverty are manifold, and the task force agreed that there was a great need for a variety of research projects in this essentially unexplored area. Among others, there appears to be a need for a better understanding of the attitude of the rural poor relative to their individual situations, their community, and the organizations and agencies serving them.

This report is a feasibility probe of discontent among the rural poor. While the scope of the study was limited, it should be useful in providing insights for those who wish to do research on this important topic. Also, it provides clues for understanding these people, who number some fourteen million, perhaps, in rural America.

Daniel W. Sturt
Director
Rural Manpower Center

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Introduction

Concern with America's "urban crisis," with its roots in urban poverty, has concealed the fact that poverty in America is disproportionately rural. Moreover, the rural poor, though fewer in absolute number than the urban poor, are in an important sense poorer than the urban poor. The rural poor have vastly inferior educational, health, welfare, recreation, economic, and other institutional facilities in their communities. Furthermore, the same aspects of population sparsity and dispersion that are partly responsible for this lack of institutional facilities probably impede access to these facilities. The "urban crisis" then is, relatively speaking, more a crisis of vocal discontent than of deprivation <u>per se</u>. Rural poverty is relatively invisible, partly because of its ecological dispersion and its smaller absolute magnitude, but also because the rural poor appear to be less discontent with and less militant about their situation; they are also less organized to protest it. The rural poor are a silent minority.

Purposes of the Study

Our general purpose was to investigate the feasibility of more systematic and larger scale research on the nature, sources, correlates, and consequences of discontent among the rural poor. Our focus was on discontent, partly because of the anomaly described previously (the silence of the rural poor in their objectively more deprived situation), but also because of the crucial role vocal discontent plays in drawing attention to, developing policies about, and instituting programs to alleviate social problems such as poverty. We assume that people don't do anything about their problems (or perhaps more important, <u>get</u> anything done) until they themselves define the problems as

problems and develop beliefs and organized efforts to bring about cures. Moreover, the developers and executors of programs designed to alleviate rural poverty must know in advance about the kinds of attitudes and behaviors they must deal with in attempting to bring about changes.

More specifically, our goals were practical, theoretical, and methodological. From a practical standpoint, we wanted to learn what we could about rural poverty by studying it first-hand, so that we could give agents, agencies, and researchers concerned with alleviating rural poverty any clues that might help them develop further approaches, particularly approaches to research on rural poverty, but also approaches to policies and programs to relate to the problems of the poor. Theoretically, we wanted to move toward developing some general notions on the relations between deprivation, discontent, and the organization of discontent in movements of protest and reform. Methodologically, we wanted to explore some ways and means of identifying, contacting, and gathering data from the rural poor. Because our empirical base for this study was modest indeed and because our purposes were mainly heuristic, we offer strictly first impressions, which should be considered merely as tentative hypotheses for further discussion, consideration, and study.

Methods

Our aim was to find an area of concentrated rural-nonfarm poverty in a portion of Michigan's Lower Peninsula which would be relatively isolated both from larger cities, and from heavy tourist trade. We wanted an area of concentrated poverty primarily for convenience in finding cases to study, but also to get whatever impressions we could about the cultural context of poverty. We decided to study rural-nonfarm poverty because the likelihood of its areal concentration is great, because identifying cases is easier than

identifying cases of farm poverty, because cases of rural-nonfarm poverty compose a substantial proportion of the rural poverty of the state, and because less is known about it than farm poverty. We wanted to study an area of the state relatively isolated from larger cities because we thought that people in isolated areas face more difficult problems in getting jobs and in getting access to institutional facilities.

Consequently, after surveillance and preliminary interviewing in several areas known to contain considerable rural poverty, we settled on an area of a county located slightly above the line which separates the more prosperous agricultural and industrial counties of lower Michigan from the poorer upper counties. This area is more than the usual commuting distance from the regionally important urban-industrial area, has a large proportion of rural nonfarm families, and a large proportion of these have annual incomes below the poverty level.[1] The particular area in which we conducted our interviews has several small lakes that are surrounded with modest cottages, some densely concentrated near the lakes, others widely scattered on unmarked and extremely poor roads in the hinterland (most of our cases were not from the most densely settled parts). Much of the population of this area is present only occasionally during the summer, but a substantial proportion of the cottages are permanently occupied by low-income families. Clearly, the relative abundance of low-cost housing in the area is an important factor in motivating the presence of low-income families.

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[1]These characteristics of the county are documented in a report being prepared for the Rural Manpower Center by William Vredevoogd and Ali Razaque. Also see: Ali Razaque, William Kimball, and Manfred Thullen, Some Dimensions of Poverty in Michigan, East Lansing: Michigan State University, Rural Manpower Center, Report No. 19, September, 1969.

The people we studied, we believe, are reasonably typical of those who occupy the small, dilapidated rural-nonfarm open-country dwellings so depressingly common in the relatively isolated "backwoods" areas of northern lower as well as upper Michigan.

Our method of selecting cases was informal: we simply selected houses which in terms of their size, condition, and surroundings appeared to be permanently occupied by people who were poor. Usually this guess was correct, although our questions about income indicated that in two cases we were clearly wrong in estimating income (the conventional criterion of poverty is an income of $3600 or less per year for a family of four) and two other cases may be slightly above this criterion -- although we suspect that these respondents exaggerated their income considerably. Thus, our sample contains families with a considerable range of variation in the lower portion of the income scale. Our findings also raise some interesting methodological questions about selecting poverty cases for study by informal inspection methods and about the validity of income figures obtained in interviews with the poor. Further, these findings raise some interesting questions about the relationship between income and consumption standards, at least in housing. The obvious answer to this paradox in at least one case was simply that the family was living in "poverty" housing in order to acquire sufficient capital to build a better house.

The interviews were conducted by two college-age women, who simply explained that they were doing a study of "Rural Living and Community Needs" and would like to talk to the people about the advantages and disadvantages of living in the country, the problems of the community, etc. They met little resistance. (Two cases promised interviews, however, but could not be found at the time appointed.) Additionally, they received no objections to their

request to tape record the interview. Thus, as one interviewer started to ask the questions, the other unobtrusively removed the tape recorder microphone from her handbag and switched it on. Usually, one interviewer asked most of the questions while the other injected appropriate rephrasings of questions, followed up interesting leads, and made observations on the family and the living environment. The interviews lasted an average of one and one-half hours, although several went considerably longer. As soon as possible after the interview was completed, the tape was transcribed, and supplemented by whatever observations and analysis the interviewers were able to make. Most of the interviews were conducted with the woman of the household (often she was the family head), but in a few interviews a husband or other man was present and participated. A considerable range of demographic characteristics is represented in our sample. (See Appendix A for a summary of the characteristics of our cases.)

The interviewing took place in the last weeks of August, 1969, after we spent several weeks developing questions and pre-testing the questions and the interview procedure. Nine interviews were conducted using the final set of questions developed, and four interviews were conducted during the pre-test stage. (See Appendix B for a copy of our interview guide.)

Our analysis consisted entirely of reading, rereading, and considering the interview transcripts and our field notes. Although we give illustrative quotations for some of our points, our impressions generally come from a more holistic consideration of the data. We are confident that we have some correct impressions, but equally confident that we have some incorrect ones; and we don't always know which are which. Also, we have been very selective and will discuss here only the data that gave us relatively clear impressions. Perhaps,

then, our major impression is that rural poverty is varied and complex, in both its behavioral and attitudinal dimensions. We have reduced it to simple terms below, but actual research on these notions would doubtless produce a much more complex, and more ambiguous, result.

Some Major Impressions

In order to get our respondents to talk about themselves we started our interviews with questions asking them to compare the relative advantages and disadvantages of rural and city living, and to evaluate their situation in this context. Most of our respondents had relatively well-developed rationales for their belief that living in the country had advantages over city life. (Some had been city residents but most had not, and most had no intention of becoming urbanites. Of course, most recognized certain advantages of city living, but seemed to feel these were outweighed by the disadvantages.) In fact, this topic proved to be one of the best articulated areas of their belief system. Mostly, the advantages they listed involved stereotypes of rurality: fresh air, space, friendliness of neighbors, etc.:

> Interview 4, question 7. What is the main reason you moved to the country?
>
> So my kids can have animals, so they can have fresh air to breathe, so we can grow a garden and watch things grow. They've got horses out here. We've got pep out here . . . Even in the winter time it's pretty here. You gotta go outside. Why stay cooped up in a stuffy old house? If you go out in the city on a winter's day, there's soot all over, the snow doesn't stay white for very long. Everybody's fightin' to get rid of it. We don't have to pay for snow removal either.
>
> Interview 8, question 17. In general, what disadvantages do city people have that you don't have?
>
> Well, I could think of alot. Air pollution, the riots in Detroit, two years ago.

Interview 9, question 17. In general, what disadvantages do city people have that you don't have?

Well, there's not any yards. You don't have any yard at all, especially if you have an apartment as we did. You don't get any air like that because you're inside because there's no yard or anything. You can't take a walk unless it's on pavement, which isn't good for your feet anyway.

Our impression, then, is that many of the rural poor selectively compare themselves with urban dwellers and manage to rationalize their own comparative advantage. Urban dwellers are a negative reference group for the most part. We also infer that such comparisons provide considerable psychological comfort for the rural poor; they can point to certain concrete, positive rewards in their life despite the fact that they do not participate in the rewards of the larger system, particularly the economic ones. Obviously, this is a difficult and unsteady dissonance reduction process, and one that is far from universal among the rural poor. Slightly below this surface layer of outward contentment, and easily tapped with some specific probing, is a deeper layer of frustration and discontent, particularly with the economic situation, but also with the institutional and social constraints of a rural life of poverty and the lack of opportunity for mobility out of this situation:

Interview 3. Are you satisfied living here?

Oh, yeah. Well this has been home so long now that--of course, there are things that I say to her [daughter]; now last summer we didn't have a picnic and this summer we didn't have a picnic. We're just not doing nothing, you know.

Interview 1, question 11: But you do go and visit once in a while with your brother? How often would that be?

I never have no money to go anywhere with, so I stay to home. That's one good reason. When you don't work and you don't got money to do with, then you sit home.

Interview 4, question 82. Have any members of your family had contacts with: Boy or Girl Scouts?

It's in town. In another sense of the word it cost too much. By the time you buy a boy scout uniform, all their handbooks--we know, we tried. We couldn't keep up with it. I got six other kids asking, "Where's mine?" And if we was to do it for all of them, we couldn't even feed 'em.

PTA?

Oh, a bunch of citified mothers. A bunch of snooty snobs. If you don't accomplish anything, why go? Where the world would I go to PTA?

Interview 5, question 52. What about the health of you and your family? Is it generally good, or are there health problems?

Well, he got sick this spring, and he had to have a specialist and we had to go clear to _____ to get one. Now to me, that's ridiculous; I mean, he had to have a doctor immediately and we took him to _____ and they wouldn't even, they had the guts to tell us to take him to _____. I'm used to a little convenience--and there ain't nothin' up here.

Interview 5, question 66. What, in the way of monthly income would you need to make ends meet nicely, that is to cover all your basic needs and keep the bills paid up?

I'm tired of getting by; I want to get ahead. I'm really against this country up here. I don't like it whatsoever. I mean as far as a place to work or a place to live, it makes me feel like I'm workin' for nothin'. I mean I'm willin' to work and I don't care how hard I work, but I'm not ever gonna go back and work for a shop or anything like that, as long as I can do it on my own and I don't like working for myself particularly, because I got a lot of problems that way. I don't know where my next job is goin' to be, and I just started and I'm not well known.

To some extent the dissatisfaction of the rural poor can be illustrated by what they desire for their children, their implicit fear and recognition that their children will not reach these aspirations, and in the keen awareness they have of their own personal failures, including their failure to take advantages of opportunities that came their way:

Interview 4, question 29. What was the last year of school you completed?

I didn't finish high school, I was stupid and got married.

How about your husband?

He didn't finish high school either. He got stupid and just plain quit. We thought we was smarter than everybody else, but we weren't.

Interview 4, question 32. Did you ever think you wanted to go to college?

I was pretty good in school, I learned a lot, I was an honor roll student. Like a dumb body I thought I was falling madly in love. You wake up 10 years later with six kids, what you gonna to do?

Interview 5, question 36. Do you think your children will get these opportunities?

I know if I don't think of something better than what I'm doin' now they'll probably never see no college. They'll be lucky if they get through high school.

Interview 7, question 32. Did you ever think you wanted to go to college?

No, I love school and I tried to get all my children to go but I never had one that graduated [from high school].

Interview 8, question 38. What kinds of jobs in general do you want your children or their husbands to have?

I want them to get out and make it. I want my girls to have the best education. I'm really serious about that. That's one thing _____ and I are really serious about. I want them to be doctors. We talk about it an awful lot. We lay in bed nights talkin' to the kids, you know. About what they want to be. A couple of 'em want to be a nurse and _____ here wants to be a school teacher and the boys here are undecided about what they want to do. But we're really serious about it.

It is not difficult to see why these people seek to salvage meaning for their lives in the rural virtues of fresh air, space, and communion with nature. In many instances they have very little else to lend meaning to

their lives, and they know the likelihood that they will have more is low. We were deeply impressed by the meagerness of their incomes and, in many cases, its variability from week to week; we were impressed with their difficulties in finding stable employment at decent wages--largely because industry is lacking in the area, but also because they lack marketable skills, although many were willing and eager to be trained; we were impressed with the miserable condition of their housing and with their ability to tolerate their lack of privacy (large families live in one or two room houses); we were impressed with the high incidence of serious, chronic health problems (including mental health problems and retardation), and with their difficulty in securing even the most minimum kinds of health care services; we were impressed with their low level of education, but perhaps even more impressed, upon reflection, that these people could have spent from eight to twelve years in school and yet emerge with so few concretely productive job skills, interpersonal skills, and so little usable knowledge of the way our social system operates (doubtless these are more the fault of the educational system than of the way they participated in it); we were impressed with how old they look in relation to their years; we were impressed with their frankness in volunteering problems of alcoholism, birth control, debt, interpersonal difficulties, relations with the law, and a host of others' problems--in many instances we clearly realized that no one had ever shown any interest in talking sympathetically with these people; we were impressed with the virtual absence of organizational involvements--they have practically no meaningful or enduring connections with the people and agencies with power, influence, or knowledge in our society; we were impressed with their physical and social isolation (it is great, but not so great as to prevent them from aspiring to the affluence of the larger society, particularly as affluence standards are brought to them

through the mass media, mainly television). In short, we were impressed by their poverty and by their ability to survive in spite of it. In fact, many of these people would probably not admit their poverty. Poverty is something, in the view of many of these people, that exists in the cities, but not in the country. One can recognize and appreciate this sort of implicit pride while at the same time realize it is highly disfunctional for these people. In particular, it is related to their failure to protest their situation and to seek aid from public health, welfare, educational, and credit agencies. (Many seem to have a considerable distrust of these agencies, sometimes because of bad experiences, but often because of their belief that these agencies are impersonal and "nosey".)

Furthermore, even though these people have their dissatisfactions, they don't know who or what or how to blame for their problems. The rural poor have complaints against wages, prices, housing, etc., but they complain mostly about highly specific events in their own immediate experience or against "government" or "politics" or simply the way "they" (the affluent and powerful world beyond them) have the advantages. The rural poor have, then, a relatively undeveloped and politically naive sense of structural blockage. They do not focus blame on meaningful dimensions of the social structure or they blame themselves or they simply regard their situation as a kind of macabre mystery. Also, they have a very low class consciousness, partly because their interaction with others is low but partly because they are deeply imbued with the Protestant ethic and sense of individualism which are characteristic of rurality. They do not see or perceive that many others share their problems, but, rather, tend to see their problems as unique and idiosyncratic. Moreover, they do not look upon the wealthier or more powerful elements of society as their general or specific oppressors. They do not

think programmatically and systematically about their problems. Indeed, almost all of their energies go into surviving, and very little time or energy is left to plan, to organize, to lead, or to participate. The motivation of the rural poor to organize is low (they are too busy hustling for survival, or simply too beaten to do anything), and their organizational abilities are low; moreover, the purposes and strategies of organization and of protest are unclear to them--realistically so perhaps.

The result is that the rural poor suffer from great alienation, resignation, and despair, and a feeling of overwhelming powerlessness. They feel that the system has passed them by, that they do not understand it, and cannot influence it. Indeed, they have only the most minimal kinds of linkages with the larger system. For the most part, their experiences with government and private agencies, and even with private businesses, have been unsatisfactory, if not disastrous. Most feel that politics work against them rather than for them. Many simply want to be left alone:

> Interview 1: Do you think the businessmen in _____ or other people do something to help the situation and get some jobs out here?
>
> I think the government could do something if they wanted to. You should go and investigate on them. If we had what they're throwing away, we could live good. All of us.

> Interview 4: What did you say about ADC? Could you explain?
>
> I could be on ADC with the kids. I'd rather not be bothered with the people, let's live our own lives. I don't want to be under somebody's thumb. Oh, that would kill me. I'd rather work, earn my own way. I don't want somebody to come stick their nose down my neck. "Whatcha got in this closet, what you got in that one." I don't feel it's none of their business what's in my closet.
>
> Is that what the government agencies do around here?
>
> Well, I imagine they do. I know people who's been on ADC and they look at the house and say, "Why, you got to move. This house ain't good enough for you." Instead of helpin' them fix up. They just ridin' on 'em constant. Sendin' all this money to the moon, and all this junk and it ain't gonna do these people right here right now any good.

Interview 5, question 85. If you were the President of the United States, what kinds of changes would you try to make?

I ain't got no faith in nobody in politics, anymore. I'm tellin' you I'm done with them, and that's includin' the President too. I have no faith in him whatsoever. He's just a little puppet. He's told what to do and his opinions aren't his own anymore. Who's tellin' him, I don't know. But when he has to read from a sheet, he must not know too much what's he talkin' about.

Interview 8, question 82. Have any members of your family had any contacts with any of these agencies or organizations in the last year or so?

[respondent talks about his baby girl who died, and how he went to the Bureau of Social Services to borrow money to bury the baby.]

The director there asked me, "Are you and your wife goin' to continue to have more kids?" I had a thousand dollar hospital bill, and I buried the baby while she was in the hospital. They couldn't help me. They wouldn't. They'd furnish a baby sitter. I was takin' the kids to work with me. They would furnish a baby sitter to take care of the kids. I told them they could go to hell--I'd take the kids to work with me, so that's just what I done. I have a station wagon. I put a mattress in the back. I put all six of them in the back of it. I'd bring 'em along and I'd milk cows in the morning at three o'clock--I'd take the kids--I'd get them up at three. Then I started milking at about 3:30 or quarter to four. And I'd go out and start the car up every little while to heat it up, to get it warm in there. Then I'd go back in and milk some more cows and then at 8:00 I'd go home, then I'd feed them their breakfast, and put them back in bed for a few hours and they'd sleep. And I'd go to bed too and sleep. Then I'd get 'em again at 2:00 and go back to work again. Put 'em in the car again and take 'em to work and they'd sit in the car and wait for me to get done milkin'. I'd get done at seven that night. Then I'd bring 'em back home, feed them their supper, put 'em back to bed again.

General Research Needs

Some of our specific impressions above may be translatable into questions for further study. Here we would like to sketch what we see as some general areas and approaches to needed research on rural poverty:

1. There is a need for much research on the mental health implications of rural poverty. We particularly need research to compare rural with urban

mental health problems associated with poverty. It may be, for instance, that the rural poor suffer less anxiety and less frustration in their situation than do urban dwellers at similar economic levels. Especially important in this context are the problems of the aged.

2. There is an important need for experimental program research. What programs will work best to educate, motivate, and train the rural poor for better lives? What programs will best equip them for migration or to get work in rural areas? How can leaders and organizations be developed in rural areas?

3. There is an important need for research on community development. How can communities in rural areas organize to provide institutions and services comparable with those in urban areas? How can rural and urban communities cooperate to provide such services? What are the problems and potentials of multi-county organization of social service agencies?

4. There is great need for research on the agencies and agents who operate in rural areas and who, theoretically, work with the rural poor. Do these agencies know the problems of the poor, their location, the ways of involving the poor in programs? What can existing agencies do to develop and disperse personnel to work with the rural poor? Colleges of agriculture have a particular responsibility for the problem of the rural poor. Could there be developed a training program for a leadership corps among the rural poor? What new modes of organization and training are necessary if the Cooperative Extension Service and other agencies and organizations are to relate meaningfully to the problem of rural poverty?

5. There is a need for a comparative approach to research on rural poverty, that is, comparing rural poverty with rural nonpoverty, rural poverty with urban poverty, etc. Also, there may be important reasons to

study rural poverty cross-nationally, since it is not at all clear that rural development necessarily solves the problems of rural people. We are not at all sure, for instance, that the peasants in developing countries are relatively worse off than the rural poor in the United States, at least by certain mental health criteria and in their sense of alienation.

Conclusions

Our impressions are mostly tentative, but we can say with certainty that at the substantive level many important problems are available for research on rural poverty, whether one's perspective is applied or theoretical. Moreover, a study of the rural poor would appear to pose few special methodological difficulties for research, except perhaps in accurately identifying the poor and measuring their income. The silent minority speak freely of their problems.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARIES OF CHARACTERISTICS OF CASES STUDIED*

Interviewee, age, age of spouse	Education (interviewee, spouse)
Female head (single) 60	8th, 8th
Wife 21, 21	7th, 12th
Female head (husband deserted) 44	10th, ?
Wife 35, 35	8th, 11th
Husband and wife 28, 23	12th+, 10th
Husband and wife 35, 35	10th, 9th
Wife 65, 65	?
Husband and wife 42, 38	12th, 12th
Wife 55, 57	8th

Occupation (man, woman)	Reported Income per month, and number in Family
Truck driver, none	$66 (1)
Brick layer (self-employed), none	$500 (4)
Carpenter (retired), none	$130 (2)
Nailer, nurses aid (unemployed)	$400 or less (9)
Tree trimmer (self-employed), saw mill (unemployed)	$300 or less (4)
	$600 (??) (3)
Railroad, hotel-service (disabled)	$120 (3)
Waitress (disabled)	$400 or less (9)
Highway construction, home retailing	$400 (?) (3)
Waitress (disabled)	

Size of House	Health Problems in Family
3 rooms	None
old trailer	Female head heart trouble
1-2 rooms	Wife heart trouble
3 rooms	Female head poor health
2 rooms	Wife heart trouble
3-4 rooms	One sickly child
2 rooms	Wife and husband poor health
3-4 rooms	None
3-4 rooms	None

*Randomized order of presentation to prevent identification of cases.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE
SURVEY OF RURAL LIVING AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

1. How long have you lived in this house?
2. How long have you lived in this general area?
3. Have you ever lived in a large city?
4. What city?
5. Have you ever lived in a town?
6. What town?
7. IF APPLICABLE: What is the main reason you moved to the country?
8. Do you have close relatives who live nearby?
9. How often do you visit them?
10. Do you have close relatives in any of Michigan's larger cities?
11. How often do you visit them?
12. How often do you get to larger cities like Midland, Saginaw, or Bay City?
13. Do you ever get to cities like Lansing, Flint, Detroit, or Grand Rapids?
14. Do you think people like you are better off in the city or here in the country?
15. Why do you say that?
16. Have you ever considered moving (back) to a city?
17. In general, what advantages do city people enjoy that you don't have?
18. What disadvantages?
19. Now I'd like to go over some specifics about your situation, what you like about it, what you don't like, and so on.
20. What about job and work opportunities for you and your family? Are you more or less satisfied with job opportunities here, or are you somewhat dissatisfied with the opportunities available?

21. AS APPLICABLE: Are you (H and W) currently employed?

22. IF NO: Have you been employed in the past two years?

23. Full or part-time?

24. What is your job?

25. Full or part-time?

26. Would you say you have opportunities to get ahead in your work?

27. What (other) sources of income do you have?

28. Where did you receive your education?

29. What was the last year of school you completed?

30. Have you ever received any special training for a trade or job?

31. Have you ever been in the military service?

32. Did you ever think you wanted to go to college?

33. What about educational opportunities for children in this area? Are you more or less satisfied with the opportunities available, or somewhat dissatisfied?

34. What improvements would you like to see be made?

35. What educational opportunities do you want your children to have? High school or college?

36. Do you think your children will get these opportunities?

37. Why or why not?

38. What kinds of jobs in general do you want your children or their husbands to have? (probe)

39. Do you want your children to live nearby when they grow up?

40. What are the main problems that children face as they grow up in this area?

41. What about your housing? Are you more or less satisfied with your housing situation or somewhat dissatisfied?

42. Could you tell me what things about your housing you would change if you could? (Probe liberally in areas of furniture, appliances, storage, space, heating, arrangements, privacy, etc.)

43. I'd like to get some additional information about your house.

44. Are you renting or buying?

45. What is your rent amount?

46. Do you have:

running water _____

automatic hot water _____

television _____

radio _____

inside toilet _____

bath or shower _____

washing machine _____

refrigerator _____

telephone _____

central heating _____

range (electric or gas) _____

car _____ year _____ condition _____

47. Do you take a newspaper?

48. Is it weekly or daily?

49. Do you regularly buy or subscribe to any magazine?

50. Do you buy most things on time, or save up and then purchase them?

51. What do you think about buying on time? Do you think merchants take advantage of people who buy on time?

52. What about the health of you and your family? Is it generally good, or are there health problems?

53. What do you think about health care facilities in this area?

54. Are you more or less satisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the health care you are able to get?

55. What about food and groceries?

56. Are you more or less satisfied with the amount and kind of food you are able to get for your family, or somewhat dissatisfied?

57. What specific problems in buying food do you face?

58. Many families in this area tell us they get the government food stamps. Do you regularly get the food stamps?

59. Many families also tell us that getting the clothing they need is difficult. Has clothing your family been a problem?

60. What specific problems in obtaining or maintaining clothing do you have?

61. Do you do any of your own sewing, that is, make your own clothes?

62. Of course, income is a key concern of every family. What about your income? Would you say you are more or less satisfied with your income, or are you somewhat dissatisfied?

63. Just roughly, what is your monthly income?

64. Was your income higher or lower or about the same as this, say three years ago?

65. Are there a lot of people around you in your same or worse income situation?

66. What, in the way of monthly income would you need to make ends meet nicely, that is to cover all your basic needs and keep the bills paid up?

67. Do you think in the next three years you probably will or probably won't make this kind of an income?

68. What will prevent you (make it possible)?

69. If you were to be extremely lucky or successful, what is the largest monthly income you might be making five years from now?

70. Now I'd like to try some questions which are a bit different, and which most people seem to enjoy doing. I'm going to read some statements, ask you if you agree or disagree, and then ask you why.

71. In general, people around here don't have much opportunity to get ahead. Do you tend to agree, or tend to disagree? Why or why not? Can you tell me something more about why you agree or disagree?

72. In general, people around here don't want to get ahead.

73. When a man doesn't get ahead in life, it's his own fault.

74. Even if people really try, they can't get ahead around here.

75. Things are happening so fast it's hard to understand life anymore.

76. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.

77. In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.

78. Most people don't really care about what happens to the next fellow.

79. Planning only makes a person unhappy, since his plans hardly ever work out anyway.

80. There's no security in life.

81. The politicians are working mainly for themselves, not for the people.

82. Have any members of your family had any contacts with any of these agencies or organizations in the last year or so?

Kiwanis

Knights of Columbus

Elks

Masons

Moose

4-H

Extension-county agent or home agent

(82. con't.)

County Social Services

County Health Services

Community Action Programs (CAP)

Church groups (probe: members, children or adults)

Farm organizations

Boy or Girl Scouts

PTA

Ladies' organizations or guilds

Recreational groups: bowling, card clubs, hunting, etc.

Political parties or groups

83. Did you vote in the 1968 presidential election?

84. Which political party, in general, do you think best represents the interests and needs of people like you?

85. If you were the President of the United States, what kinds of changes would you try to make?

86. What things in this country do you think really need changing?

87. If you received a gift for $500.00, how would you spend it?

88. About how often do you chat with or visit neighbors?

89. Do you and your neighbors ever talk over problems with each other?

90. What kinds of problems?

91. If you were able, what things would you like to have changed most in this community?

Do you think any changes are needed in: the school system? the local government and politics? the churches? other organizations or groups? the welfare system? shopping? jobs and employment? health care facilities?

92. What are some of the things you'd like to do but can't in your present situation?

93. We've covered a lot of areas, but maybe we haven't covered some things you would like to talk about. Are there any community needs or problems of people living here that we haven't covered?